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## **Jewel Cave National Monument News Release**

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## **Jewel Cave Bids Farewell to Superintendent Suess**

After eight years, Superintendent Todd Suess is saying good-bye to Jewel Cave National Monument. He is moving to Olympic National Park in Washington state and is preparing for his new position as Deputy Superintendent.

Todd has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota. He entered the realm of land management career opportunities over twenty years ago. Fifteen of those years have been within the National Park Service. He has worked at an assortment of significant sites, such as Lincoln Home National Historic Site (Illinois), Mammoth Cave National Park (Kentucky), Great Smokey Mountains National Park (Tennessee), Dinosaur National Monument (Colorado), Pipestone National Monument (Minnesota), and Devils Tower National Monument (Wyoming). He also had a brief stint with the Bureau of Land Management in Arizona as an Outdoor Recreational Planner.

Todd leaves his professional mark on the operations at the Monument by improving and enhancing a number of visitor services and projects dealing with resource management. He was instrumental in the creation of the cave tour reservation process. This not only offered more tours for park visitors, this direction has caused the on-site interpretive programming to become more organized. He initiated an Adopt a Classroom Program with the Custer School District, which received national attention. During his tenure, cave exploration has become a vital part of the work plan and has caused international recognition by cavers around the world. The volunteer program has increased in size, which opened project opportunities for youth groups and local civic clubs. Todd thoroughly immersed himself in the resource and used his first superintendant position to advance the mission of the Monument. This was even more solidified this past fall, when Todd was honored as Government Employee of the Year by the Custer Chamber of Commerce.

Todd departs Custer with his wife, Jackie, and family in mid-February. He leaves behind his active support for community groups, such as Custer Rotary and Custer Chamber of Commerce. Todd states, « Jewel Cave has provided me with personal and professional memories that will last a lifetime. Of course, the resource is significant and will always capture the attention of visitors. Most important, the resource is being managed by a dedicated group of passionite staff members that I will truly miss. I am looking forward to my new professional opportunity, yet I will certainly miss my colleauges and the local community. »

The incoming superintendant is Mike Tranell, who is currently serving as a Special Assistant to the Alaska Regional Director. He is located in the Washington D.C. Office and is expected for arrival to Jewel Cave on February 22. His detail is planned for about two months. Mike has 25 years of experience within the National Park Service and has worked at Timpanogos Cave National Monument and Denali National Park.

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